

COMPANION
FOR THE
CLOSET,

CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING PARTICULARS, *viz.*

- I. Several Important Questions.
- II. Practical Observations.
- III. A Description of the Covenant of Grace.
- IV. The Faithfulness of God to that Covenant.
- V. Some Eminent Relations which subsist between
CHRIST and real Believers.
- VI. Family Rules.
- VII. A Regulator for the Affections.

Duncan WITH A *12 K*
DEDICATION

TO THE
PIOUS YOUTH OF EVERY DENOMINATION,
THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

By a Lover of YOUTH and EARLY PIETY.

Wherewith shall a *Young Man* cleanse his Way? By taking heed
thereto according to the Word of God. *Pf. cxix. 9.*

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all
these Things shall be added unto you. *Matt. vi. 33.*

The Second Edition, corrected and enlarged.

TO WHICH IS ADDED
RULES for understanding the Scriptures; and also some Ob-
servations on Conversation in Company.

ROCHESTER:

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[Price TWO PENCE.]

TO THE
YOUTH of every DENOMINATION,
Throughout this KINGDOM.

DEAR YOUNG SOULS,



WHEN on the One Hand, I behold you wasting to the dangerous Pinnacle of Ambition, agitated by a powerful flow of Youthful unsubdued Passions, thirsting after novelty, and love of Praise, deeply possessed with fear of Disappointment, ambitious of Power, and hating Controul—together with that susceptibility of Mind which is peculiar to your tender Years.—On the other Hand, when I look round and view the Vices which are prevalent among all Sects; how iniquity of every kind runs down our Streets like a rapid Current.—The little regard which is thought due to Laws, Human or Divine! The small attention paid to God's Sabbaths and Worship, either in public or private; together with that amazing coldness, indifference, security and deadness, in which many Professors among us lay, starving almost to (spiritual) Death; refusing to be awakened or aroused; or even to taste the Cup of Life! Sad examples for you! Therefore I'm constrained to cry—Lord, what shall be the end of these Things? What wilt THOU do unto this, thy well cultivated, well watered, but barren Vine?

Are these Observations Fictitious? Nay, you abound with instances to the contrary. Where is the Parish, the Family, the Parent, the Master, whose conduct does not amply prove the truth of my assertion? and would to God, I could clear the Sacred Order of LEVI, from the same Charge! and what is the consequence of these sad Truths? Thousands of the Youth of both Sexes poisoned by Example, Education, and Principles—
which

TO the YOUTH of every DENOMINATION, &c. iii

which being added to the depravity of their Nature, will prove (if mighty Grace prevent not) their present and final Ruin.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS, Suffer one who hath your present and future welfare at Heart—to beseech you, for the sake of the adorable JESUS who bled and died for you.—For the sake of your precious and immortal Souls—(which soon must be lodged in the glorious Regions where God and Angels dwell—Or plunged in the Abyss of endless Torment, with Devils and damned Spirits!) to think seriously, even now, while you are reading this, of the nature, and evil of your Sins! The shortness and uncertainty of Life—and turn to the Saviour of sinners. O beg for Mercy and Pardon by the Merit and Mediation of JESUS, who alone is able to wash you in his most precious Blood; and so present you to God the Father, holy and unblameable. To assist you, in this very important and absolutely necessary undertaking, I have submitted the following Pages for your Assistance, and Companion in the Duties of the Closet—do you commit them to practice. And that the Spirit of the GOD of ISRAEL, may attend you in the use of them, with Power, is the earnest Prayer.

Of your most Affectionate Friend,

and Servant in the Gospel,

JOHN DUNCAN.

A
C O M P A N I O N
F O R T H E
C L O S E T.

Several Important and USEFUL QUESTIONS,
by that eminent Divine Mr. JOSEPH ALLEIN, who,
was ejected from St. Mary Magdalen's, in Taunton,
Somersetshire, in 1662.

Whereby a Christian may every day examine him-
self.--Ps. iv. 4. *Commune with your hearts upon
your beds.*

Every evening before you sleep (unless you find
some other time in the day more for your advan-
tage in this work) withdraw yourself from the
world; and having set your heart as in the pre-
sence of the Lord, charge it to answer the fol-
lowing questions.

QUESTIONS for your DUTIES.

1. **D**ID not God find me on my bed, when he looked
for me on my knees? *Job. i. 5. Ps. v. 3.*
2. Have I not prayed to no purpose, or suffered wandering
thoughts to eat out my duties? *Matt. xv. 8. Jer. xii. 2.*
3. Have I not neglected, or been very superficial in reading
God's holy word? *Deut. xvii. 19. Josh. i. 7, 8.*
4. Have I digested the sermon I last heard? have I thought
it over, and prayed it over? *Ps. i. 2.—cxix. 5, 11, 97.*
5. Was there not more of custom, and fashion in my family
duties, than of conscience? *Ps. ci. 2. Jer. xxx. 21.*
6. Wherein have I denied myself for God this day? *Luke
ix. 23.*
7. Have I redeemed my time from too long or needless
visits, idle imaginations, fruitless discourse, unnecessary sleep,
and from more than needful care about my worldly affairs?
Eph. v. 16. Col. iv. 5.

8. Have

8. Have I done any thing more than ordinary for the church of God, in an extraordinary time? *Isa. lxii. 6. 2 Cor. xi. 28.*

9. Have I taken care of my company? *Prov. xiii. 20. Ps. cxix. 63.*

10. Have I not neglected, or done, something against the duties of my relations, as a *master, servant, husband, wife, parent, child, &c.* *Eph. v. 22. 10 chap. vi. verse 9.*

QUESTIONS about your SINS.

1. **D**OES not sin fit light? *Ps. xxxviii. 4. Rom. vii. 24.*

2. **A**M I a mourner for the sins of the land? *Ezek. ix. 4.*

3. Do I live in nothing that I know, or fear to be a sin? *Ps. cxix. 101. 1 Thess. v. 22. Jam. ii. 10.*

QUESTIONS about your HEART.

1. **H**AVE I been much in holy ejaculations? *Nebem. ii. 4, 5.*

2. Hath not God been out of mind, and Heaven out of sight? *Ps. xvi. 8. Jer. ii. 32. Phil. iii. 3. 20.*

3. Have I been often looking into mine own heart, and made conscience of vain thoughts? *Prov. iii. 21.—24.*

4. Have I not given way to the workings of pride, passion, and lust? *2 Chron. xxxii. 26. Matt. v. 28. Jam. iv. 1—6.*

QUESTIONS about your TONGUE.

1. **H**AVE I bridled my tongue and forced it in? *Jam. i. 26.—iii. 2.*

2. Have I spoke evil of no man? *Tit. iii. 2. Jam. iv. 11.*

3. Hath the law of the Lord been in my mouth, as I sat in my house, went by the way,---laying down and rising up? *Deut. vi. 6, 7.*

4. Have I come into no company where I have not dropped something of God—and left some good favour behind? *Col. iv. 6. Eph. iv. 29.*

QUESTIONS about your TABLE.

1. **D**ID I sit down with any higher end than a beast, merely to please my appetite? Did I eat and drink for and to the glory of God? *1 Cor. x. 31.*

2. Was

2. Was not my appetite too hard for me? *Jude* xii. 2 *Pet.* i. 6.

3. Did I not rise from the table without dropping any thing for God there, when I had an opportunity? *Luke* vii. 36, &c. xiv. 1, &c.

4. Did I not mock God when I pretended to ask a blessing, and return thanks? *Acts* xxvii. 35. *Matt.* xv. 36. *Col.* iii. 17.

QUESTIONS about your CALLING.

1. **H**AVE I been diligent in the duties of my calling? *1 Cor.* vii. 17.

2. Have I defrauded no man? *Matt.* vii. 12.

3. Have I dropped no lye in my shop, or about my business this day? *Prov.* xxi. 6. *Eph.* iv. 25.

4. Did I rashly make, or falsely break, some promise? *Josh.* ix. 6. 14. *Psa.* xv. 4.—cvi. 33

At evening to myself I say,

My Soul, where hast thou glean'd to day,

Thy labours where bestow'd?

What hast thou rightly said or done,

What grace obtain'd, what knowledge won,

In following after God?

Ruth ii. 19.

D I R E C T I O N S

F O R T H E

M O R N I N G.

1. **I**F you have omitted the weighing of these questions in the evening, be sure you do it now.

2. Ask yourself, what sin have I committed? What duty have I omitted? Against which of these rules have I offended in the past day? and renew your repentance, and double your watch.

3. Examine whether God was last in your thoughts when you went to sleep, and first when you awoke.

4. Enquire whether the care of your heart and ways increases, or abates and grows less.

5. Impose it as a task upon yourself to meditate frequently upon the present frame of your heart; upon the *Scripture* last read or heard, or upon some other divine theme, till this work becomes as your meat and drink.

6. Set

6. Set your ends right for all that day.
7. Set your watch especially against those sins and temptations, to which you are most likely to be exposed that day; and pray always.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

1. **I**F morality, and attending upon divine ordinances, were all that God required of US, self-examination might be needless (accordingly it is neglected, by most professors) but religion is heart work; and as *the heart is deceitful above all things*, and especially so, with respect to the duties we owe to God: therefore,

2. If you never examine yourself, you are certainly *dead in trespasses and sins*; and the wrath of God abides upon you. *Prov. xxx. 12. 1 John i. 6.* We must judge ourselves now; or, hereafter be condemned with the world.

3. He that examines himself, and yet goes on in any allowed way of sin, will soon grow weary of this work; and is never likely to know himself, till he awakes in hell.

4. When you have examined and discovered your sins, remember that the covenant of works, and your own righteousness which is only of the law, however exact it may be, can neither procure you a pardon, nor furnish you with any strength, wisdom, or resolution for subduing their power. *Rom. iv. Gal. iii.* But,

5. *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh has effected.* The blood of Christ has sufficient virtue to cleanse you from all sin; his intercession shall save; and the omnipotent JESUS stands at your right hand, ready to give his holy spirit to every one that desires immediately to return to God by him; and to be conformed to his image. *Rom. viii. 3, 14, 17, 29.* Therefore,

6. Come to him; for there is no relief for you but in the Covenant of Grace—Salvation belongeth to the Lord.

A DESCRIPTION of the
COVENANT OF GRACE.

A PROMISE is nothing else but a present word for a future blessing; and a COVENANT is an engagement ratified and confirmed with some peculiar solemnity.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE, is a free and firm obligation, in which the blessed God makes over himself as FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, and all that he has, and is, as the God of Nature and Providence, Grace and Glory, to all believers in Christ; who is the only way unto this Covenant, and the Truth and Life of it. *Is. xii. 6. John xiv. 6.*

The Language of this COVENANT is,

I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. *Gen. xvii. 7. Heb. viii. 10.*

As tho' he had said;

To day I settle, and will every day bestow myself upon thee. My nature, my abilities, my works, are all thine. in the comfort and advantage of them; yea, all that thou canst expect or desire from a God, believe it thine.

My son, my spirit, my love, my comfort, my happiness, and all my perfections are yours.

They are not yours by title, but mine in possession; but I will make them effectual for your happiness, in time and eternity; For

1. I will freely pardon thy sins, and pass by thy daily transgressions. *Mich. vii. 18. Rom. viii. 1. Heb. viii. 12.*

My very being, and my nature, as God, stand bound to make this good unto thee. *Exod. vi. 3. Heb. vi. 13—18.*

2. I will renew and sanctify thy nature. My holiness shall make you holy; my truth, righteousness and mercy, shall make you true, righteous, and merciful.

To accomplish this,

I will give thee an heart to know the Lord. *Jer. xxiv. 7.*

—— one heart. *Ezek. xi. 19.*

—— a new heart, and a new spirit. *Ezek. xi. 19.*

I will take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh. *Ezek. xxxvi. 26.*

I will circumcise thy heart to love the Lord thy God. *Deut. xxx. 6.*

I will put my fear in thy heart, and thou shalt not depart from me. *Jer. xxxii. 40.*

I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments. *Ezek. xxxvi. 27.*

From all your filthiness and idols will I cleanse you. *ver. 25.*
For

For I will make all my goodness to pass before you, on earth and in heaven. *Exod. xxxiii. 19.*

3. I will do every thing else that is needful for thee, every thing that is desirable; yea, every good thing which thy nature is capable of.

My power is infinite, it is thy defence.

My wisdom is unsearchable, it shall look out for the proper time, and way to do thee good.

My mercies are large, deep, and durable, they are thine.

My truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

I will visit, commune, and dwell with thee.

More particularly,

I will be light to thy darkness. *Prov. iii. 6. Isa. xlii. 16.*

—— Wisdom to thy folly. *Isa. xxx. 21. Jam. i. 5.*

—— Strength to thy weakness. *Isa. xl. 26, &c.*

I will be health to thy sickness. *Pf. ciii. 3.*

—— Plenty to thy wants. *Isa. xxxiii. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 8.*

I will bless thy bread and thy water. *Exod. xxiii. 25.*

I will pity thee under all thy miseries. *Pf. ciii. 13.*

I will be with thee in trouble. *Isa. xxxiii. 2.*

I will deliver thee and honour thee. *Pf. xci. 15.*

I will be gracious to pass by thy unworthiness. *Mich. vi. 18.*

I will be merciful to pardon thy sins. *Heb. viii. 12.*

I will be holiness to change thy nature. *Eph. iv. 24.*

I will be assistance to thy duties. *Heb. xiii. 21.*

I will be comfort to thee in trouble. *Pf. xxiii. 4.*

I will be wisdom to thy doubts. *Mark xi. 23.*

I will be power against thy enemies. *Pf. lxxviii. 35.*

I will be deliverance in thy straits. *Exod. xiv. 7.*

I will bless thy substance. *Ezek. xxxvi. 11.*

I will be providence to thy undertakings. *Pf. i. 4.*

I will be preservation to thy person. *Pf. cxxi. 8.*

I will be salvation to thy soul. *Pf. xcvi. 2.*

I will be thy sun and shield. *Pf. lxxxiv. 11.*

I will be thy life in death. *John xi. 25.*

I will be thy God, thy guide, thy joy and delight; thy recompence, and exceeding great reward. *Gen. xv. 1.*

All Things are yours. *1 Cor. iii. 21.*

My providence shall work together for thy good. *Rom. viii. 28.*

My Angels shall minister unto thee. *Pf. xxxiv. 7. Heb. i. 14.*

My ordinances shall do thy soul good. *Pf. cxxxii. 15. Rev. ii. 1.*

As the God of all grace, and the father of all glory, I will give thee grace and glory. *Pf. lxxxiv. 11.*

I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. *Heb. xiii. 5.*

I will rejoice over thee to do thee good. *Jer. xxxii. 40, 41.*

I will be thy God and guide for ever. *Pf. xlviii. 14.*

I will be thy exceeding great reward. *Gen. xv. 1.*

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. *Pf. cxliv. 15.*
Ob! seek his face evermore. *Pf. cv. 4.* --- *And,* take heed, lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. *Heb. iii. 12.* For, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? *Heb. ii. 3.*

BEHOLD the FAITHFULNESS of GOD

T O T H I S

MOST GRACIOUS COVENANT.

GOD is not a man that he should lie, } *Numb.*
 Nor the son of man that he should repent. } *xxiii. 19.*

When he could swear by none greater, he swore by himself.
Heb. vi. 13.

He betroths in *faithfulness*. *Hos. ii. 20.*

His counsels are *faithfulness*. *Isa. xxv. 1.*

He afflicts in *faithfulness*. *Pf. cxix. 75.*

He answers in *faithfulness*.

He sheweth forth his *faithfulness* every night. *Pf. xcii. 2.*

The girdle of his reigns is *faithfulness*. *Isa. xi. 5.*

He abideth *faithful*. *2 Tim. ii. 13.*

He will not suffer his *faithfulness* to fail. *Pf. lxxxix. 33.*

His *faithfulness* endureth to all generations. *Pf. cxix. 90.*

Great is his *faithfulness*. *Lam. iii. 23.*

His *faithfulness* reacheth above the clouds. *Pf. xxxvi. 5.*

His *faithfulness* is established in the Heavens. *Pf. lxxxix. 2.*

SOME EMINENT RELATIONS,

WHICH SUBSIST BETWEEN

CHRIST and true CHRISTIANS,

By which Professors ought frequently to try themselves.

1. **C**HRISt is king and governor. *Rev. xvii. 14.* Am I his loyal subject?
2. He is prophet and teacher. *Acts iii. 22.* Am I one of his disciples?
3. He

3. He is *high-priest* and *advocate*. *Heb. iv. 14.* *1 John ii. 1.* Am I daily relying upon his *satisfaction, intercession* and *righteousness*?

4. He is the *physician* of souls. *Mat. ix. 12.* Am I sensible of my *spiritual sickness*; or, *am I made whole*?

5. He is the *reconciliator*. *Eph. ii. 16.* Am I reconciled to God by him? do I really love him?

6. He is *Lord* and *Master*. *John xiii. 13.* Am I his faithful servant?

7. He is *captain of our salvation*. *Heb. ii. 10.* Am I a Christian Soldier fighting the Lord's battle?

8. He is the redeemer and deliverer from the power and guilt of sin. *Rom. xi. 26.* Am I delivered from the dominion thereof?

9. He is the *bread of life*. *John vi. 48.* Am I feeding on him by faith and love?

10. He is the *vine*. *John xv. 1.* Am I ingrafted in it?

11. He is the good *shepherd*. *John x. 11.* Am I his sheep—attentive to his voice?

12. He is *head* and *husband*. *Eph. v. 23.* Am I joined to him by living faith—do I cast my care upon him?

13. He is the *Christian's example*. *John xiii. 15.* Do I imitate him?

14. He is the *Christian's fore-runner*. *Heb. vi. 19.* Am I in the high way of holiness?

FAMILY RULES.

1. **W**E have no time given us to throw away, but to improve for eternity; therefore, we can join in no conversation that is unprofitable; but in that only which is good, to the use of edifying; ministering grace to the hearers,——
Therefore,

2. We have nothing to say to the news of the town, and of the business of others; for we desire to hear of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Neither,

3. Have we any thing to say to the misconduct of others; let not the fault of any absent person be mentioned, unless absolute necessity require it, and then, let it be with the greatest tenderness, without dwelling upon it. May God preserve us from a censorious, criticising spirit, which is contrary to that of Christ:

4. We offer the right-hand of fellowship to every one that cometh in the name of the Lord; but we receive none to doubtful disputations; but whosoever loveth the LORD JESUS in sincerity, the same is our brother, sister and mother; for we cannot but remember,——God is love.

5. We neither receive nor pay visits on the Lord's day, for we and our house desire particularly on that day to serve the Lord.

6. We do earnestly desire every one to reprove us when we deviate from any of these Rules, so shall we be as guardian angels to each other; and, as an holy mingled flame, ascend up before God.

R E G U L A T I O N F O R T H E A F F E C T I O N S.

LET your Affections be on things above. *Col. iii. 2, 5.*

J O Y.

Rejoice in the Lord alway—again I say rejoice. *Phil. iv. 4.*

With Joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation. *Isa. xii. 3.*

Then will I go unto the Altar of God—my exceeding Joy. *Pf. xliii. 4.*

The Joy of the Hypocrite is but for a Moment. *Job xx. 5.*

The meek shall increase their Joy. *Isa. xxix. 19.*

Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. *Matt. xxv. 23.*

And your Joy no man taketh from you. *John xvi. 22.*

S O R R O W.

They that escape shall be on the mountains like doves—mourning every one for his iniquity. *Ezek. vii. 16.*

Sorrow is better than laughter. *Ecc. vii. 3.*

Godly Sorrow worketh repentance. *2 Cor. vii. 10.*

Sorrow not as those without hope. *1 Thess. iv. 13.*

The Lord shall give rest from thy Sorrow. *Isa. xiv. 3.*

L O V E.

Jesus said—thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul. *Matt. xxii. 37.*

We love him, because he first loved us. *1 John iv. 19.*

O! how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. *Pf. cxix. 97.*

Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? *Rom. viii. 35.*

H A T R E D.

Ye that love the Lord, hate evil. *Pf. xcvi. 10.*

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. *Prov. viii. 13.*

The fear of the Lord is to hate every false way. *Pf. cxix. 104.*

The fear of the Lord is to hate all vain thoughts. *ibid. 113.*

The fear of the Lord is to hate not thy brother. *Levit. xix. 17.*

The fear of the Lord is to hate and abhor lying. *Pf. cxix. 163.*

O! do not the abominable thing that I hate. *Jer. xlv. 4.*

F E A R.

Be not afraid of them that kill the body—but fear him—who hath power to cast into hell. *Luke xii. 4.*

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. *Prov. i. 7.*

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. *Pf. cxi. 10.*

Fear of the Lord longeth life. *Prov. x. 27.*

Fear of the Lord is strong confidence. *Prov. xiv. 26.*

Fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. *Prov. xiv. 27.*

Fear of the Lord is his treasure. *Isa. xxxiii. 6.*

Fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life. *Prov. xxii. 4.*

Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. *Pro. xxiii. 17.*

D E L I G H T.

The good man's delight is in the law of the Lord. *Pf. i. 2.*

Delight thyself in the Lord. *Pf. xxxvii. 4.*

Thy comforts delight my soul. *Pf. xciv. 19.*

I delight to do thy will. *Pf. xl. 8.*

I sat down under his shadow with great Delight. *Song ii. 3.*

In whom is all my Delight. *Pf. xvi. 3.*

The prayer of the upright is God's Delight. *Prov. xv. 8.*

RULES to ascertain the true Sense of SCRIPTURES.

1. **A**SSIGN no irrational or absurd sense to the word of God; never fix any meaning to scripture which is contrary to sound reason and common sense; both of which are of great use to a gracious soul, in comparing and judging one part of the word of God with the other; and, to adopt that sense, which corresponds with the main leading doctrines of the gospel.

2. When you attempt to judge any divine subject by reason, be sure that they are such subjects as are within the compass of reason. Many subjects are above reason, and in such cases, reason has only to submit to the truth, as revealed from a wise, faithful God. Such subjects are the following:—The Unity of three persons in the Godhead. The Incarnation. The New birth. The Natural and Moral Perfections of God—with many more in the World of Nature.

3. Never bring any principle with you to Revelation, but such as is evident and clear to your reason; i. e. such self-evident principles, or eternal axioms of truth which shine bright into the understanding, and penetrate the mind with evidence and force.

4. Submit your reason to Divine Revelation and the discoveries of God, which reason could never do without the light of Revelation.

5. Offer no violence to the language of scripture, nor give evasive explanations of it--on subjects as are not branches of natural religion.

The prevailing evil of this day, among the numerous sects of professors, in Great Britain, from the Bishop to Cobler, is, to bend the Sacred Scriptures down to the support of their favourite systems.

6. Distinguish well between the principles of natural and revealed RELIGION: altho' the former is contained in the Bible, even in their utmost perfection; as well as the latter in their brightest beauty and glory.

7. Make it your study to observe the real intentions and designs of the divine writers, and learn to understand their ideas, images and phrases, and read them in their proper connection and meaning.

8. Allow every word of scripture its proper sense; *i. e.* the natural sense which scripture conveys. Firmly and strictly adhere to this rule, which if you do, it will prevent much uneasiness and waverings in your own mind, as well as the prevailing errors in the church of God.

9. Diligently compare the word of God with itself, collect the several parts of scripture on the same subjects, and in the same views. By this means you will have the most striking and beautiful evidence of the doctrines of the gospel before your eyes, which will be of the greatest advantage to you.

10. Remember whatever is begun with humble, hearty prayer to God, for his infinite grace, mercy, protection, and instruction, will be attended with a blessing.

Audi, cerene, tace, si tu vis vivere in pace.

The choice of company and behaviour in it, is of great moment to Youth. 'Tis, perhaps, difficult to lay down any certain rules for the Choice of company, but not so respecting your conduct when in it.

BE not too open in company; this will not only expose your own weakness, but lay you open to many inconveniences.

Be not too reser'd; this will render your company disagreeable and unprofitable.

Be not over suspicious. 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

Be not over credulous. Jer. xl. 14--16. The simple believeth every word, but the prudent looketh well to his goings.

Become all things (of an indifferent nature) to all men in a wise.

wise, bumble, and loving manner, that you may gain an interest in their affections, and so be profitable to them.

Do not meddle with other mens business, except upon necessary occasions. *1 Thess. iv. 11.*

Learn to know a proper time to speak, as well as to be silent. *1 Tim v. 13.* Be not hasty to speak. *Prov. xxix. 11.* Nor much in speaking. *Prov. xvii. 27.* In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise. *Prov. x. 19.*

Be sparing to speak of yourself, or actions to your own praise, except in case of necessity. *2 Cor. xii. 11.* And even then let it be with the utmost modesty. *Philip. iv. 12, 13.* If men speak good of you to your face, suppress them as soon and wisely as possible. If it is true bless God, if false try to make it true.

Should men report evil of you to your face, be not so desirous to know who raised it, or how to confute them, or to clear your reputation amongst men; as to make a good use of it before God—for such reports do not rise without God's permission. *2 Sam. xv. 11.*

Do not speak evil of any man. *Tit. iii. 2.* Nor speak the evil you know of any man, except absolute necessity require it.

Beware of keeping company with, or in the least abating whisperers, tale-bearers, and slanderers. If good men are the salt of the earth, *these* are the curse of all religious society, and bane of good neighbourhood. Therefore set your speech and countenance against them, like the north wind against rain. *Prov. xxv. 23.*

Detract not from any man's credit, by either secret whispering, open backbitings, casting evil aspersions, or by pitying him, &c. &c. &c. in the too common cant phrases of formal hypocrites; a set of beings which ought to be exposed by all honest men.

Let not your conversation be neither prophane or corrupt. *Eph. iv. 29.* Much less defiled with oath-curses (or even minced-oaths) prophane jests, or indulging lightness in conversation. O! how has such practices as these grieved my soul, from old professors, and even *Ministers* too. Read *Col. iv. 6.*

Be sure to avoid flattery and fawning. *Job xvii. 5.*

Bitter railing, censorious, &c. &c. *Eph v. 3, 4, 31.* Wanton prophaneness, lascivious, and such like. *Col. iii. 8.*

False, foolish, idle and fruitless conversation. *Col. iii. 9.* Let neither your passion of joy, grief, fear, anger, &c. &c. get their head, and so exceed their bounds; for then it is that even good men speak unadvisedly. *Job iii. 3.* Never let your tongue run before your judgement.

Rather.

Rather make the first, never the last, that shall leave the company.—Weigh and ponder in the balance of reason, all your actions and words before you vent them.

Be neither too high nor too hearty in your praises. Beware of contentions, dry disputings, personal squabbles, especially with low, weak, and self-conceited persons. Make choice of a bosom friend; but be very careful of your choice. Reveal no secrets to any person, but such as may have it as much for their interest to keep them, as yourself.

Lastly. Be much in prayer to God before you come into company. Let the three petitions, in the following texts, always have a place in such prayers. *Pf. cxlii. 3, 4. Pf. li. 15. Col. iv. 6.*

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